



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Elk Refuge

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PO Box 510
Jackson, Wyoming 83001

Lori Iverson
307/733-9212, ext. 227

NATIONAL ELK REFUGE SLEIGH RIDES TO VIEW ELK BEGIN DECEMBER 11 AT THE JACKSON HOLE & GREATER YELLOWSTONE VISITOR CENTER

Starting Monday, December 11, horse-drawn sleigh rides will be available to the public to view wintering elk on the National Elk Refuge. Sleigh rides will operate daily from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Jackson Hole & Greater Yellowstone Visitor Center, located at 532 N. Cache Street in Jackson. To kick off the 2006-07 season, local residents and area visitors are encouraged to take advantage of a free sleigh ride day on Friday, December 15.

Last winter, over 21,000 visitors took the educational sleigh rides to view the wintering Jackson elk herd. The rides are operated under contract and are offered on a first-come basis; reservations are accepted for group and private tours only. Passengers purchase tickets at the distinctive grass-roof Visitor Center, open 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM daily, and take a shuttle to the sleigh boarding area two miles north of Jackson on Highway 26/89/191. Rates are \$16 for adults, \$12 for children ages 5 through 12, with children under age 5 riding for free. Sleighs depart three to four times each hour throughout the day. Rides typically last 45 minutes to one hour, depending on the location of the elk and weather conditions. Passengers should dress warmly in layers to accommodate wind and cold temperatures.

Sleigh rides are a unique way to observe and photograph wildlife on the Refuge. The National Elk Refuge provides habitat for up to 175 bird species and 47 mammal species. Sleigh ride passengers frequently have the opportunity to observe coyotes, bald eagles, deer, trumpeter swans, bighorn sheep, bison, wolves, ravens, magpies and other wildlife. The Jackson Hole & Greater Yellowstone Visitor Center offers additional information on wildlife through video presentations, exhibits, hands-on materials and items sold through the Grand Teton Natural History Association's bookstore.

To inquire about group or private tours, or for further information about the sleigh rides, please call the sleigh ride operator at 307/733-5386. Both the Visitor Center and sleigh ride operations will be closed on Christmas Day.

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www.fws.gov/nationalelkrefuge